

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**SR 520 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT & HOV PROJECT**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**ST. LUKES LUTHERAN CHURCH, BELLEVUE, WA**  
JULY 15, 2003 – 2:00 – 4:00 P.M.

**Introduction and Meeting Objectives**

Aubrey Davis opened the meeting by welcoming the Executive Committee and members of the public. He acknowledged that it has been more than six months since the last meeting. Aubrey reviewed the agenda, which included an overview of the tolling analysis, project update, project options, cost and schedule update, and the decision on the draft environmental impact statement (EIS) options.

**Overview of SR 520 Tolling Analysis Update**

Brent Baker, Parsons Brinckerhoff, updated the committee on tolling. Earlier work performed under a large scope looked at several of the regional transportation improvement district (RTID) projects. Since then, the project has taken a closer look at the SR 520 corridor, using the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) model with updated assumptions, also assuming other projects in the area. This information is still at planning grade analysis. The project is nearing completion on some work regarding the 6-lane alternative. A key part of this work is using the stated preference survey of single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) and high-occupancy vehicle-2 (HOV-2) users. The earlier objective was to achieve network efficiency and minimize diversion impacts to other facilities. This is also an objective of more recent work, but a component has been added regarding what toll structure would maximize revenue and the corresponding impacts. This more recent work will give us a range of tolling amounts and the impact on other facilities as the result of diversion. The lower range will give us network efficiency, that is how much you charge to help encourage drivers to change their driving patterns balance or reduce congestion. The upper range will give us maximum revenue regardless of impact on other facilities. At some point the toll gets so high that too many drivers go somewhere else and revenue goes down. For both of these it is assumed nothing else is tolled.

A revenue maximizing tolling objective manages congestion on the facility and keeps traffic moving. The off-peak toll would be \$0.80 and the peak toll would be \$5.90 in 2014 dollars. If there were no real value of time (VOT) growth assumption the annual revenue in 2014 dollars would be \$80 million. If there were a one percent real VOT growth assumption, the annual revenue in 2014 dollars would be \$91 million. This objective results in higher traffic diversion. The average daily trip diversion is 42%.

This diversion could be load shifting to carpools – or a diversion of trips to I-90 and other routes.

If the tolling objective was network/economic efficiency, and there was no VOT growth assumption, the annual revenue in 2014 dollars would be \$56 million. If there were a one percent real VOT growth assumption, the annual revenue in 2014 dollars would be \$63 million. The off-peak toll would be \$0.60 and the peak toll would be \$3.70 in 2014 dollars.

Aubrey Davis, Chair, concluded the tolling presentation by stating that SR 520 cannot be replaced without tolls. All financing plans include tolls on this bridge. Consider future technologies – not toll plazas. He acknowledged that there is a lot of work left to do before a right answer regarding tolling structure is determined.

Comments/Questions:

- Grace Crunican, City of Seattle, asked if I-90 were an assumed RTID project. *I-90 is not an assumed RTID project, so there is no assumed toll on I-90.*
- Grace asked what would happen, if I-90 were tolled? *Toll diversion would happen on I-90. There would be a lower rate of diversion between both SR 520 and I-90. You would end up with a higher level of traffic on SR 520.*
- Dave Asher, City of Kirkland, is this model assuming tolling only on SR 520? *Modeling work assumes pricing on other RTID projects are in place.*
- Jack Crawford, Sound Transit, what is the effect of traffic on SR 522, if this toll on SR 520 takes effect? Also, what are potential mitigation measures in Lake Forest Park and the surrounding areas? *There is a shift of increased trips on SR 522, but much smaller than on I-90. Once the toll rate is determined that will help us look at other impacts to arterials and state routes – adjustments can be made.*
- Cynthia Sullivan, King County Council, expressed concern about not having tolls for 9 hours a day when trips were minimal. Even when congestion is virtually zero, it may be wise to capture revenue since people are using a new structure. In these very tight revenue times every nickel needs to be scrounged. Why not toll, but at a lower rate? *Consistency with earlier work that is why we took this route. Could seek a network efficiency objective for pricing. Will not be a huge amount – 9% of the volume.*
- Daniel Becker, City of Medina, requested more information on tolling facilities, such as transponders. What percentage of drivers uses it versus those drivers that insist on paying cash? He expressed concern about a SR 520 toll plaza. Also, if tolling is not completely automated, a turn-around facility will be needed. *Electronic toll collection is the trend. In Toronto, Canada, there is a license plate recognition system that bills customers. In Melbourne, Australia, consumers can go to a website or call to pay tolls (license plates are recorded). The technology is changing so rapidly – there may be something even different by the time SR 520 is ready.*

## Project Update

Maureen Sullivan, WSDOT, provided a funding update. The State Legislature approved \$52.3 million for the project EIS, right of way, and design. The Legislature also approved \$3.5 million for noise walls on I-5. Another piece approved was \$102.3 million for the West Lake Sammamish/SR 202 interchange. This project will be funded separately from SR 520.

Maureen noted two reasons for the project delay over the past few months: the failure of R51 in November 2002 put the project on hold, and early this year, the Legislature asked the project to look at 8 lanes at I-5. Both have added significant time to this project. The project team aims to release the DEIS in Summer 2005, but would like to accelerate the process, if possible.

## Project Options

Les Rubstello, WSDOT, discussed the project options. They are as follows:

- 4-lane replacing the bridge and approaches (base case). The 4-lane base case is virtually identical to the 4-lane alternative from a year ago except for the flyer stops at Montlake were removed, and pontoons would not be expandable for HCT. Widened shoulders and bike lanes would also be part of this alternative. Cost range = \$1.5-\$1.8 billion.
- 4-lane with pontoons that are designed to accommodate high capacity transit (HCT) in the future. The 4-lane with expandable pontoons runs from the shoreline at Medina to the shoreline at MOHAI. There is a 30-foot center area for future HCT with widened outer lanes. Cost range = \$1.6-\$1.9 billion.
- 6-lane with pontoons that are designed to accommodate future HCT, replacing 2 general-purpose lanes plus one HOV lane in each direction. This option is most similar to the 6-lane modified from before. The option runs from I-5 to Bellevue Way (no weave fixes). There are continuous HOV lanes from the Arboretum to SR 202. Cost range = \$2.1-\$2.5 billion.
- 8-lane with pontoons that are designed to accommodate future HCT, replacing 2 general-purpose lanes, adding one general-purpose lane and one HOV lane each direction. This option needs much work at the I-5 and I-405 interchanges. Cost range = \$2.9-\$3.4 billion.

Since the beginning, the project has been assessing what is buildable. The project has emphasized the necessity to repair the aging floating bridge and approaches, ways to increase mobility across the lake, reparation of habitat and wetland, and noise reduction. All of this will be looked at as a package.

## Comments/Questions:

- Dave Asher asked if there would be a flyer stop at Bellevue Way. *The Bellevue Way terminus has been a struggle. Work continues on a solution; however, it is unlikely this flyer stop will fit into the project budget, but a cost will be produced*

- Rosemarie Ives, City of Redmond, asked about HCT accommodation on the shores. *There is no accommodation in this project for what happens on land. A February 2003 report – Summary of HCT Screening Process: Evaluations and Recommendations – stated that it would be necessary to buy right-of-way to make true accommodation for a future facility. To start buying right-of-way you need to start the decision process – and that was beyond the range of the EIS.*
- Rosemarie expressed that those committee members who have been part of this process for 4 or 5 years recognize that there has been sufficient conversation about HCT. We should think about advancing HCT as soon as possible - to make sure that whatever we do on either side of the bridge does not preclude HCT, such as a deficient interchange design. *This is not the project's responsibility, but we are trying to protect the possibility. There is hope that Phase 2 of Sound Transit will begin to address these issues.*
- Grace Crunican stated that her understanding of HCT accommodation is that it is a fatal flaw analysis – not scoping the exact route, but conferring with various transportation providers.
- Daniel Becker asked how the project would handle turnouts without land acquisition? *We have layed this out with 6 lanes with center flyer stops. It is tight but takes no homes. The right-of-way is not totally utilized today.*
- Tom Paine, City of Redmond, asked if HOV drops off westbound and picks up at Portage Bay. *The project is struggling with inside-outside HOV lanes on the reduced scope 6-lane alternative. The project has held discussions with Sound Transit. It is not an optimal situation. The lanes are general-purpose from Montlake to I-5.*
- Fred McConkey, Town of Hunts Point, asked if the 8-lane alternative is still the same footprint as it was 8 months ago. *Yes, same footprint. Changes to the 8 lanes are at I-5.*
- Tim Ceis asked if noise mitigation is examined in all options? *That is correct.*
- Tim asked if information from the continued 8-lane alternative work will be used to look at connecting HOV lanes from Montlake to I-5 in the 6-lane alternative or used to solve other problems in the corridor. *The project will deal with this. In the definition we had six months ago, the 6-lane and 8-lane were identical from Seattle Yacht Club to I-5. The footprint for 8 lanes could be transformed into the 6-lane alternative.*
- Dave Asher asked if traffic going to the University of Washington still requires a weave? *Part of the 8lane cost adds an entirely new interchange about where MOHAI is and north through a tunnel (Montlake Cut) to UW. The full 6lanes had direct HOV ramps to Montlake Blvd – has been removed in reduced 6lanes.*

## Cost and Schedule Update

Maureen Sullivan discusses the Cost Estimate Validation Process (CVEP). The CVEP figures for each option take past costs into account. The following costs in 2012 dollars are associated with each option: \$1.5-1.8 billion (4-lane, no HCT accommodation); \$1.6-1.9 billion (4-lane, with HCT accommodation); \$2.1-2.5 billion (6-lane); and \$2.9-3.4 billion (8-lane). It is important to note that the costs associated with the 8-lane option do

not include improvements that will need to be made at the I-5 and I-405 interchanges. Other information relating to cost reduction - WSDOT can use the grading dock in Port Angeles to build the pontoons (presently being used for Tacoma Narrows Bridge), and some time was saved considering construction sequencing.

Questions/Comments:

- Fred McConkey asked if some of the interchanges make these numbers a lot more expensive? *The costs for I-5 and I-405 improvements as part of the 8-lane option are not included. We will need to look at funding sources.*
- Grace Crunican asked if costs “to be determined,” means that money will be spent to figure out those costs? *Costs and schedule do not include any improvements on I-5 or I-405. The legislature did provide money to investigate improvements. Our hope is to do this work in the fall and complete first quarter of next year, including cost estimation. All costs reflect alternatives that work. To provide context, if you multiply the present cost of the 8-lane alternative by 3, you are nearer what it may cost to do improvement at I-405 and I-5.*
- Tim Ceis requested clarification that 4 lanes and 6 lanes are complete project costs. *Yes.*
- Rosemarie Ives stated there is a need to have a scenario where HOV continues from Redmond to I-5. As one of 47 study committee members, we had HOV as our highest priority. It is difficult to believe HOV will become reality.
- Connie Marshall, City of Bellevue, requested clarification on the HOV lane scenario for 6 lanes. *Coming across the bridge westbound there are 3 lanes. Once you get to Montlake, the HOV lane is dropped and two general-purpose lanes continue. Heading eastbound, HOVs enter and weave across to the inside shortly east of Montlake. The exact determination of where HOV lanes begin and end has yet to be determined. This conversation is a good illustration of the difficulty of inside vs. outside HOV lanes.*
- Tim Ceis noted the configuration drops from 6 to 4 lanes and picks up on the other side of the Montlake overpass. *The percentage of traffic that gets off to go to the UW tells us we can still get a good flow across.*
- Daniel Becker asked how much is in the RTID proposal for SR 520, if the vote goes forward? *Total is a little under \$2 billion.*
- Daniel asked if FHWA would allow movement forward if I-5 and I-405 have yet to be taken into account. *The legislature provided funding that requires the project to look at 8 lanes, which accounts for the work at the interchanges.*
- Daniel stated that the project had discussed moving HOVs to outside. Is this going to be taken into consideration in the EIS process? *The weave is a concern and it will continue to be looked at. Inside verses. outside HOV is an operational issue – continuity of the corridor needs to be taken into consideration.*
- Connie Marshall expressed concern that the HOV lane at Bellevue Way as part of the 6-lane alternative has been dropped. *We are building a HOV lane through the Points and rebuilding the Bellevue Way Bridge and merge into 6 lanes that are there. Continuous HOV system but not the direct access ramps at 108<sup>th</sup>. Still*

*looking at direct access at 108<sup>th</sup> that could be added to this project. Maureen – fuller option at Bellevue we were in 5-6 billion range.*

- Dave Asher expressed appreciation that creativity on the project has not stopped. This looks like the beginning of a good discussion of choices, but not the end. He expressed significant concerns about: HOV connections, viable options in creating new pavement both east and west, and dramatic traffic drop at Montlake and the center weave to existing ramps. Considering improving this list of alternatives to go into the EIS process.

## **Decision on EIS Options**

Aubrey Davis asked the committee to vote on the role of the preliminary preferred alternative (PPA). The 30-member committee voted unanimously, with one abstention, to continue studying all four bridge options, backing away from its preferred six-lane alternative. This furthered study will include looking at continuous HOV lanes from Redmond to Seattle.

Aubrey concluded the meeting by stating the next committee meeting would take place in fall 2003.

### Comments/Questions:

- Tim Ceis stated that the project has come a long way since the PPA decision last fall. During that period of time, circumstances have changed in the region. It is no secret that Seattle was not satisfied. These 4 options go a long way to begin to alleviate these concerns. Within these four options there is enough diversity to address all concerns. Even though it was mandated to look at 8 lanes – it will provide us with valuable information. We did the initial PPA for an RTID ballot that did not come together. This time the PPA decision should be made at the conclusion of the process – similar to what was done for I-90 today. Confident that a conclusion will result that the region will accept. Motion made to reserve the PPA decision for the conclusion of the process.
- Connie Marshall thanked all the members of the committee. SR 520 remains one of Bellevue's highest priorities. She supports a careful analysis of all alternatives. Supportive of the proposal to remove the PPA. A thorough analysis is more important. Seconds Tim's motion.
- Dave Asher appreciates the motion and general intent. He considers the present shape of the alternatives an unworkable composition. Wishes he had faith that a workable combination could be chosen at end of EIS. If you go into the process with unworkable alternatives it sets the project up for less than a satisfactory conclusion. I cannot lend support at this time.
- Rosemarie Ives stated that she and the Redmond City Council are supportive of 8 lanes being analyzed. It is difficult to believe that HOV lanes can be extended from Redmond to I-5, if not presently shown. The City of Redmond does not support the options.

- Tim Ceis recalled hearing that WSDOT will analyze HOV connections in the EIS.
- Connie Marshall requested that Tim Ceis alter his motion to include HOV to each terminus, so she, and others, could support it.
- Tim Ceis senses that the committee is in support of a full HOV analysis. Tim amended his motion to include a full HOV analysis.
- Connie Marshall supports the amended motion.
- Dave Asher expressed increased comfort with the amended motion.
- Dan Becker stated that the 8-lane alternative is not a “real” option in the region unless funding is identified, but he supports further study of the other options.

## Public Comment

- Jonathan Dubman, Montlake resident and SR 520 Advisory Committee member, disagrees with the 8-lane alternative. The following is the written text of his comment: I’m feeling good, because this committee just voted to build the 4-lane alternative. The price of the 6-lane alternative that carries full HOV lanes all the way to I-5 was originally \$6 billion – with the original project limits – and that money isn’t there. The elephant in the bedroom is that the 8-lane project – which I am going to start calling “Horn’s Folly” – is never going to happen, because it’s going to require jacking up the Convention Center, taking out a row of skyscrapers, or putting a vehicular tunnel under Capitol Hill. It ain’t gonna happen. And I don’t know what happens east of I-405 where it’s only 6 lanes today, if the project no longer goes that far out. Furthermore, it delays this whole process, while the bridge is at risk and we all continue to suffer from congestion. I’m worried that the taxpayers won’t be happy when they wake up to the fact that their money is being spent on this instead of something that will improve people’s lives in our lifetime. The 6-lane alternative is also problematic, and we heard a number of comments to that effect. We’ve had the Mercer Weave for years – and now we’re talking about introducing the Montlake Weave. Even if we fix that, the last traffic modeling results I saw actually made the traffic worse half the time. Now, admittedly, it was also better half the time, but worse half the time is pretty bad for spending \$2 billion. I’m pleased that this model will now be updated for the tolled condition and it will be interesting to see those results. The solution that makes sense is congestion pricing with buses running more efficiently on a rebuilt 4 lane facility, and HCT as a second phase, to UW – Seattle’s largest employer – and to South Lake Union – which is going to add 20,000 jobs. I’m happy that this can take place within the framework of at least one of the alternatives now on the table – the 4 lane plus HCT alternative. Thank for your attention.
- Virginia Gunby, 1000 Friends of Washington and SR 520 Advisory Committee member, suggested proposing a strong tolling program on I-90. Tolling analysis needs to be applied regarding diversion to I-90. Consider I-90 impacts. She was disappointed to hear that the SR 520 Advisory Committee will be abolished, and believes this to be a mistake. The committee has been instrumental in responding to plans as they move forward.

- Peter Hurley, Transportation Choices Coalition and SR 520 Advisory Committee member, voiced support for Virginia's comments and added that he would rather the project ask the Advisory Committee if they want to be split up rather than make the decision without consulting members. The committee has been helpful with idea generation for the project and he encourages the project to ask the committee what they wish to see happen.
- Public comment from Seattle residents, Susan Mosborg & David Bean, addressed to SR 520 Advisory and Executive Committee members: We were dismayed to read in this morning's paper that the proposal to expand the 520 bridge to 8 lanes is back on the table. As homeowners in the Montlake neighborhood since 1989, we are intimately familiar with the traffic-flow patterns and consequences that occur when 520 and I-5 back up at this end. Even were I-5 to be expanded by 2 lanes, an 8-lane 520 would seriously compromise the character and quality of life in one of Seattle's beloved neighborhoods. The surface roads from 520 to the U. District and U. Village (especially when the Montlake Bridge opens) are already at a standstill much of the time and additional cars coming off extra lanes of 520 will only make that situation worse. There appears to be no slowdown in the construction of condominiums in that part of town-all with additional parking spaces-which also portends a worsening of congestion. Already this surface-street congestion makes it more difficult to take public transportation from neighborhoods south of the Montlake cut to the University and U. Village areas; one can often walk faster than the busses can get through. Coupling more freeway lanes with disincentive to board public transit seems to be a recipe for disaster in the Montlake and U. District /U. Village areas. Personally, we are not concerned about the time sitting in traffic as much as we are the air and noise pollution from the vehicles zooming and sitting. (Were that everyone had hybrid cars!) Air quality will surely go down and noise will go up, despite the planned noise-level barrier bordering the freeway. Call us NIMBYs, but we believe the issues are larger than Montlake; they concern our willingness to pave over everything and destroy the very things that are precious and make for livable cities and suburbs: clean air, protected waterways, vistas, quiet neighborhoods. If we are really serious about solving our transportation problems, we must provide more incentives for people to substitute other forms of transit for their cars, such as rebates to families who own only one car, and more public incentives for hybrid and fuel-cell cars, trucks, and busses. We respectfully urge you to strongly oppose the expansion of 520 to 8 lanes.

### **Committee Members**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Organization</b>
x	Asher	David	City of Kirkland
x	Becker	Daniel	City of Medina
x	Berry	Jeanne	Town of Yarrow Point
x	Burleigh	Mary-Alice	City of Kirkland
x	Cairns	Bryan	City of Mercer Island
x	Ceis	Tim	City of Seattle



<b>Present</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Organization</b>
x	Crawford	Jack	Sound Transit
x	Crunican	Grace	City of Seattle
x	Davis	Aubrey	WSDOT
x	Dye	Dave	WSDOT-UCO
x	Earling	Dave	Sound Transit
x	Edwards	Bob	Puget Sound Regional Council
x	Fiske-Zuniga	Anne	City of Seattle
x	Griffith	Reema	WA State House of Representatives
	Horn	Jim	Washington State Senate
x	Ives	Rosemarie	City of Redmond
	Jacobsen	Ken	Washington State Senate
	Jahncke	El	City of Mercer Island
	Kargianis	George	Washington Transportation Commission
	Krochalis	Rick	Federal Transit Administration
	Leonard	Jim	Federal Highway Administration
x	Marshall	Connie	City of Bellevue
x	Martin	George	City of Clyde Hill
x	Mathis	Daniel	Federal Highway Administration
x	McConkey	Fred	Town of Hunts Point
x	McKenna	Rob	King County
	Murray	Ed	WA State House of Representatives
x	Noble	Phil	City of Bellevue
x	Paine	Thomas	City of Redmond
	Pflug	Cheryl	WA State House of Representatives
	Rourke	Philip	City of Clyde Hill
	Rutledge	Steve	Town of Yarrow Point
x	Sullivan	Cynthia	King County
x	Sullivan	Maureen	WSDOT-UCO
x	Taniguchi	Harold	King County
	Wills	Heidi	City of Seattle

### **Public Participants**

- Jonathan Dubman, Montlake

- Virginia Gunby, 1000 Friends of Washington
- Peter Hurley, Transportation Choices
- Jane Hadley, Seattle P-I
- Neil Strege, Representing King County Councilmember David Irons
- Len Newstrum, Yarrow Point
- Elizabeth Newstrum, Yarrow Point
- Randy Bannecker
- Jay Alexander, House Transportation Committee
- Reema Griffith, House Transportation Committee (representing Ed Murray)
- Paul Matsuoka, Sound Transit
- Mary Oderat, Medina
- Cathy George, WSDOT NWR
- Andrew Schmid, Representing Cythnia Sullivan
- David Allen, Seattle
- Kim Becklund, Bellevue
- Bernard Van de Kamp, Bellevue
- Goran Sparrman, Bellevue
- Diane Carlson, Bellevue
- Terry Marpert, Redmond
- Luke Esser, Senator
- Will Knedlik, Citizens Own Sound Transit (COST)
- David Godfrey, Kirkland

#### **Project Team Members**

- Aubrey Davis, Chair
- Maureen Sullivan, WSDOT-UCO
- Les Rubstello, WSDOT-UCO
- Greg Wornell, WSDOT-UCO
- Paul Krueger, WSDOT-UCO
- Eric Chipps, Sound Transit
- Brent Baker, Parsons Brinckerhoff
- Susie Serres, EnviroIssues
- Joy Goldenberg, EnviroIssues
- Courtney Caughey, EnviroIssues
- Lindsay Yamane, Parametrix
- Lorie Parker, CH2M Hill